

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 IO-14 INRE-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 AID-20 OMB-01 DRC-01

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O R 131805Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4954

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 1016

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINT, ES

SUBJ: PARTIAL ELECTION RETURNS: UNO PROTEST

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

1. ELECTORAL COUNCIL (CCE) ON MARCH 12 ISSUED FINAL LEGISLATIVE RETURNS FOR 4 OF COUNTRY'S 14 DEPARTMENTS (SANTA ANA, USULTAN, AHUACHAPAN AND SAN VINCENTE) AND "PRELIMINARY" RESULTS FOR THREE OTHERS (MORAZAN, CABANAS, LA UNION). SANTA ANA RESULTS GIVE PCN LEAD OVER UNO THUS LIMITING UNO TO TWO OF THE FIVE ASSEMBLY SEATS FROM THAT DEPARTMENT. IN AHUACHAPAN, PCN IS GIVEN SLIM LEAD OVER FUDI BUT SUFFICIENT TO ASSURE THE OFFICIAL PARTY TWO OF THE THREE SEATS FROM THAT DISTRICT. FINAL RESULTS FROM USULATAN AND PRELIMINARY TALLY FROM LA UNION ARE PARTICULARLY SUSPICIOUS BECAUSE OF SHARP INCREASE IN TOTAL VOTE OVER 1972. IN USULTAN, PCN VOTE JUMPED FROM 30 THOUSAND TO 50,000 FROM 1972 TO 1974 WHILE UNO REMAINED AT ABOUT 10,000. ACCORDING TO CCE'S OWN PRE-ELECTION ESTIMATE OF REGISTERED VOTERS IN THAT DEPARTMENT, THIS YEAR'S TURNOUT AMOUNTED TO A

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PHENOMENAL 80 PERCENT OF USULATAN'S ELIGIBLE VOTERS (IN THE

HOTLY CONTESTED 1972 PRESIDENTIAL RACE ONLY 63 PERCENT VOTED.)
NET EFFECT IS TO HOLD UNO TO ONE OF FOUR ASSEMBLY SEATS FROM
THAT DEPARTMENT. PRELIMINARY RETURNS FROM LA UNION SHOW
SIMILAR INCREASE LEADING ONE UNO SOURCE TO COMMENT THAT
SHARP RISE IN THE VOTE IN ONLY TWO YEARS UNDERSCORES NEED
FOR NATIONAL FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM.

2. BOTH MORNING PAPERS MARCH 13 CARRY UNO'S DECLARATION OF
PROTEST. OPPOSITION DESCRIBES ELECTIONS AS DEMONSTRATION OF
TWO FORCES; THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE ON ONE HAND AND THE "CYNICAL"
GOVT, BENT ON MAINTAINING ITS TWO THIRDS MAJORITY OF
THE ASSEMBLY AT ALL COSTS, ON THE OTHER. UNO ACCUSES THE
GOVT AT THE CCE OF RESORTING TO LEGAL TRICKERY TO
DISQUALIFY OPPOSITION SLATES AS WELL AS FRAUD AND HARASSMENT
DURING AND AFTER THE VOTE, THE LATTER ESPECIALLY PREVALENT
IN THE EASTERN DEPARTMENTS OF LA UNION, MORAZON, SAN MIGUEL
AND USULATAN. THE OPPOSITION CONTENDS THAT PARAMILITARY FORCES
SUCH AS ORDEN ACTUALLY CONTROLLED THE ELECTORAL PROCESS IN
MANY AREAS WITH THE "COMPLACENT COMPLICITY" OF THE REGULAR SECURITY
FORCES. THE OPPOSITION COALITION PRESENTS ITS OWN ESTIMATE OF
RESULTS IN THE LEGISLATIVE RACE WHICH GIVES THE UNO 17 SEATS,
PCN 32, PPS 1 AND FUDI 2, I.E., THE COMBINED OPPOSITION
WINNING MORE THAN ONE THIRD OF THE SEATS IN THE FORTHCOMING
ASSEMBLY. UNO WILL ALSO SPONSOR TV SHOW EVENING MARCH 15
PRESUMABLY TO REITERATE ITS CHARGES. ONE NEWSPAPER REPORTS THAT
UNO WILL ALSO SEEK CCE NULLIFICATION OF THE ALLEGED VICTORY
OF THE PCN IN SOME DEPARTMENTS AND MUNICIPALITIES. IT IS
UNLIKELY, HOWEVER, THAT THE OPPOSITION WILL GO BEYOND SUCH
PRO FORMA PROTESTS IN DISPUTING THE ELECTION RETURNS.

4. IF PRELIMINARY CCE RETURNS ARE TO BE BELIEVED, PPS MAY
HAVE DONE SO POORLY AS TO SUBJECT ITSELF TO NULLIFICATION
OF ITS STATUS AS A REGISTERED PARTY SINCE THE ELECTORAL LAW
STATES THAT ONE PERCENT OF THE VOTE MUST BE WON IN ORDER TO
RETAIN INSCRIPTION. AND, IN A CLEAR REFERENCE TO FUDI, ONE
CCE MEMBER QUESTIONED WHETHER PARTIES THAT RUN ONLY IN A
DEPARTMENT OR TWO SHOULD QUALIFY UNDER THE ELECTORAL LAW.
SCOTT

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